

Intervention: Intensity of programs

Finding: Insufficient evidence to determine effectiveness

Potential partners to undertake the intervention:

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Nonprofits or local coalitions | <input type="checkbox"/> Businesses or labor organizations |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Schools or universities | <input type="checkbox"/> Media |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health care providers | <input type="checkbox"/> Local public health departments |
| <input type="checkbox"/> State public health departments | <input type="checkbox"/> Policymakers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hospitals, clinics or managed care organizations | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |

Background on the intervention:

Prevention programming varies from low to medium to high intensity levels, in terms of the duration of time spent delivering the program.

Findings from the systematic reviews:

There is insufficient evidence to demonstrate that intense programs (more hours in the classroom) are more effective than less intense programs (fewer hours in the classroom).

Practices that lack sufficient research to support effectiveness should not be confused with ineffective programs. Rather, they should be recognized as programs that have the potential to become evidence-based practices—if properly evaluated. Practitioners are encouraged to monitor the impact of these programs in their communities and report on their findings in order to build a base of knowledge sufficient to reach consensus.

Limitations/Comments:

Tobler, et al., find an apparent interaction effect between intensity and interactive programs. Interactive programs have somewhat better outcomes as intensity is increased. However, there seems to be little change in effectiveness of non-interactive programs as intensity increases.

References:

Cuijpers P. Effective ingredients of school-based drug prevention programs. A systematic review. *Addict. Behav.* 2002 Nov-Dec; 27(6):1009-1023.

Tobler NS, Roona MR, Ochshorn P, Marshall DG, Streke AV, Stackpole KM. School-based adolescent drug prevention programs: 1998 meta-analysis. *Journal of Primary Prevention* 2000; 20(4):275-336.